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Northern Region News

A Newsletter for Employees and Retirees

ISSUE 10

October 1994

The 1994 Fire Season... and it's not over yet.

"It's been a rough summer, emotionally and physically," stated Steve Karkanen, on detail as Fire Management Officer for the Ninemile Ranger District this fire season. His comment referred to the 4,804 fires reported to date on lands within the boundaries of the Northern Rockies Area, and the fatalities suffered by firefighters both in and outside the Region.

The Ninemile District, Lolo National Forest, was the first to be really pummelled this summer. "At one point we had 24 fires going at the same time," Karkanen recounted. The most difficult fire for Karkanen personally was the Squaw Peak fire that involved the crash of an air tanker in which two people were killed.

With fires burning throughout the West, competition for resources, personnel, and supplies complicated firefighting efforts. Within the Northern Rockies Area (corresponds to boundaries of Region One), 296,780 acres have burned so far this fire season.

To date, the largest single acreage fire was the Baby Dean Fire on the Northern Cheyenne Agency in southeast Montana. Baby Dean burned an area approximately 14 miles by 17 miles, totalling some 62,800 acres. Remarkably, there was no loss of life or residences, but outbuildings and stacks of hay needed to get cattle through the winter burned.

A particularly troublesome group of fires on national forest land in Region One was the Libby Complex in the Kootenai National Forest. One of the fires crept within 2 miles of the city limits of Libby, a town of about 3,000 population; another threatened the municipal watershed and thus endangered Libby's water system. "The situation was complex because the fires were so widespread across the forest," stated Bob Krepps, Incident Information Officer on the Kootenai Fires. The lightning storm on August 14

started nearly 150 fires. During one period, crews were battling 23 fires simultaneously.

The Powell Ranger District in the Clearwater National Forest was hard hit as well, with 14,322 acres burned by the Powell Complex of fires. It was the worst fire season since 1929 when 45,094 acres were burned.

Property in the urban interface presented special complications to firefighters. "We've been so lucky in the past," stated R.C. Carroll supervisory forestry technician who manages the initial attack crew of the Missoula District, "with everybody building in box canyons, one road up, one road out."

Carroll described other dangers presented by housing developments built on hillsides with dry vegetation below. That was the situation he and his crew dealt with on the Butler and Grant Creek fires near Missoula. "Sadly not enough people pay attention to leave defensive space around their homes," he warned, making firefighting in the urban interface all the more troublesome.

The fatalities weighed heavy on Carroll's mind as he spoke of the season. "It was depressing for everybody," he said, as he expressed the hope he would never have to make a phone call to the parents of any of his crew, informing them of a fatality or injury to their child.

Carroll's crew is very young, most just out of high school. Many are from the cities and have limited experience in handling tools and equipment. Because of the age and background of his crew, training in the basics is an important part of his job. The season has emphasized for Carroll that "Safety has to be the number one priority."

The season saw the total number assisting in firefighting efforts rise to a high of 10,100 personnel, which included Montana National Guard as well as two U.S. Army battalions and one U.S. Marine battalion.

FIREFIGHTING

and What History Tells Us

by Edward Heilman, Retired Former Director,
Region 1 Aviation and Fire Management

The 1994 fire season will probably join many others of historic note: 1871, 1910, 1929, 1934, 1949, 1956, 1967, 1988, and many others too numerous to list. Some were notable for large burned acreages, others for high costs, and others for the loss of human life. The one factor that distinguishes 1994 from all the others is its immediacy—it just happened, and our memories of this summer's events are far sharper than those of a more distant past. However, a knowledge of history can improve our perspective if we will but look.

The disastrous fall 1871 fire season in the Lake states was marked by a staggering number of fatalities. Although accurate figures are not available, over 2,200 people were known to have died just from the Peshtigo and Humboldt fires in Wisconsin. Undoubtedly some of those who lost their lives were firefighters. The 1910 fires in this region were known to cost 85 lives, nearly all firefighters. The October 1933 Griffith Park fire in Los Angeles claimed the lives of 26 firefighters, even though the fire was only 47 acres.

The current popularity of the late Norman Maclean's book, "Young Men and Fire" has given the August 1949 Mann Gulch fire tragedy in the Helena National Forest a much wider public interest. The more recent July 1994 deaths of 14 firefighters near Glenwood Springs, Colorado, has caused much private, public, and agency concern.

So what has come of all these and many other fire tragedies? In some instances both public and governmental attention can be both cyclical and all too short-lived. Winter rains sometimes tend to wash away fire season concerns.

In other cases, really significant changes have taken place. The 1910 fires were the real test of the 1908 deficit financing act for emergency fire funds, today known as FFF. This funding process permitted resources to be allocated to firefighting un-

encumbered by financial restraints. Congress sustained the 1908 act, even with the 1910 jolt. The 1934 fire season resulted in the 1935 implementation of a new fire control policy which came to be known as the "10 a.m. policy." It had as its goal fire suppression by 10:00 a.m. following the report of a fire or at least to have sufficient resources apportioned by that time to achieve control.

The 1956 fires, most notably in southern California, resulted in major strengthening of Forest Service fire safety practices—the newly proclaimed 10 Standard Firefighting Orders, organized and widely distributed fire behavior and other fire training, the development of protective clothing and fire shelters, the beginnings of the national—eventually inter-agency—fire qualification system (red cards), and other changes. Other fire events have resulted in other greater or lesser changes.

Despite the technical advances made in firefighting, we are faced with the fact that firefighting remains an inherently hazardous occupation. Firefighters cannot be made absolutely fireproof any more than soldiers or police can be made bulletproof. David Godwin, one of the most astute Forest Service fire leaders, who later became the fire director in the Chief's Office, said in 1937, "In man's control of forest fires some accidents will occur—just as in city fire protection—without fault or failure on the part of anyone."

Despite the fact that accidents will assuredly happen with the best of training and preparedness, it will be in all our best interests, as our predecessors did before us, to understand thoroughly, apply diligently, and persist in applying the remedies that come from the 1994 fire season and the many previous fire seasons which have a story or a lesson to tell us.



Firefighting generally conjures up an image of people, bent at the waist, furiously digging fireline with pulaskies. But just as an army has to be supplied in order to fight, so the 9,500 firefighters who worked in Region One so far this fire season require 9,500 pulaskies—and an equal number of shirts, pants, hard hats, sleeping bags, and countless other items. And then there's the medical supplies, batteries, fire hose, and everything else it takes to keep people in the field fighting fires.

The organization in the Region responsible for the enormous task of keeping the equipment and supplies flowing is the Northern Region Fire Cache, located at the Aerial Fire Depot in Missoula. Their success is based on the ability to respond quickly, with the supplies in place, ready to go.

The operation is complex and mind-boggling. Making sure it works smoothly is Chuck Sundstrom, supply unit manager, and the fire cache crew. Chuck and his crew know the 41,000 square feet of storage space composing the fire cache as if it were their basement workshop. Nothing is out of place to ensure no time is lost searching for needed supplies. Stacks of materials are placed on pallets so they can be easily picked up by a forklift and carried to shipping trucks within one hour of receiving an order.

With the millions of dollars tied up in supplies, the fire cache crew sees there is little or no waste. Tons of supplies worth about 35 million dollars have been shipped to 375 wildland fires so far this fire season. A staff person is assigned to track by computer all the comings and goings of supplies to guarantee things are

The Fire Cache Just Keeps Rolling Along



Above, fire cache employee checks specifications of pulaski for accuracy after grinding. At left, employee runs pressure tests on used water hoses.

not "lost in the shuffle." Most of the supplies will be returned to the fire cache at the end of the fire season for refurbishment.

During fire season, the fire cache buzzes with activity. In one area a group of people roll sleeping bags, fresh from the cleaners, for easier storage and later shipment to the field. In the grinding room, six people bend over grinding wheels, sharpening pulaskies, checking every one that comes in from the field for damage. An employee is stationed in what appears to be a giant closet, pulling medicines and bandages off shelves to put in first aid kits.

Another room hums with the sound of pumps, chainsaws and generators being tested. Up to 600 pumps, 600 chain saws and 100 generators will be refurbished during this fire season. Outside the building, water hoses, looking like giant strings of spaghetti laid side by side, are undergoing pressure testing, cleaning and rolling.

There are no idle hands. Everyone knows their job and understands the importance of it. The fire cache is like a well-run machine that just keeps going and going and going.

Battling fires from far away.... GIS Satellite Images

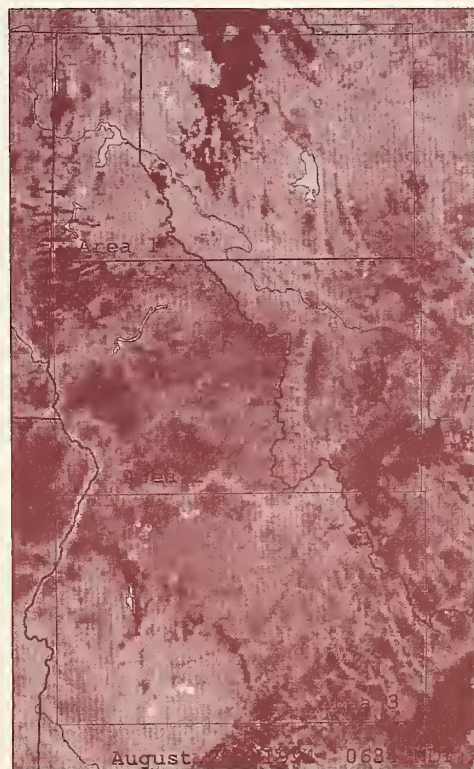
by Gretchen Lentz, Computer Specialist
Regional Office

During this year's busy fire season, fire management officials in Region 1 had a new tool to assist in fire detection and monitoring - weather satellite pictures.

Two or three times daily, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association satellite passes directly over the Northern Region and beams data down to a receiving station in San Diego, California. During August and September, this data was made available to the Forest Service, where it was processed into graphics files by a Region 4 GIS team in Ogden and the Management Systems staff in Region 1. The images were plotted on poster-size paper on color plotters and delivered to the Aerial Fire Depot twice a day to provide a "snapshot" of the current fire situation.

To create images as shown at right, the satellite collects thermal data, which is then evaluated to reproduce the current condition of

the landscape underneath. In the finished product, cooler areas are represented by darker shades. Notice in the picture taken on August 21 at 6:34 a.m., that large bodies of water reflect more heat than the surrounding land early in the morning, so they show up lighter. Areas of higher elevation are slightly darker than the valley bottoms but the black smudges in the picture are due to cloud cover. The small white speckles represent active hot spots at the time the satellite passed overhead. By comparing the location of the white areas each morning and evening, fire officials were able to monitor existing fires and alert forests of possible new starts.





LIFE in the Base Camp

"It was like a fantasy. All these people picked up from all over the country, put down in one place, and then we were gone."

- Milo McLeod,
Archaeologist
Lolo National Forest

For Milo McLeod, running a base camp for fire crews proved a real change of pace from his job as archaeologist for the Lolo National Forest. During a 29-day period during this year's fire season, Milo served on four separate fires in the Region, managing both base camps and "spike" camps (small, auxiliary camps).

His job on the Ann fire in the Bitterroot National Forest involved making sure there was food for 315 people three times a day, functioning toilets, an adequate number of tents or shelters and beds for the camp's firefighters, seeing the large piles of trash were picked up, giving "wake-up" calls to crew bosses and camp overheads, and a host of other duties. There was rarely a lull in the day's or evening's activities in that firefighters worked around the clock in 12 to 14-hour shifts.

Base camp manager is an important responsibility because the ability of the firefighter to be alert and function properly is partly due to adequate food and sanitary living conditions. If a firefighter is tired or ill, accidents can happen that could be life-threatening.

"At first, during the buildup period, there is constant activity getting things set up," Milo explained. Then a routine is set. After wake-up call, crews wash, eat, and go out on the line. They return after their long shifts, eat and go to bed.

Perhaps it's not surprisingly that crews, who come from numerous agencies all over the country, have little opportunity for interaction. They arrive as a crew and remain together as a crew. Sometimes language barriers hinder communication. Milo cited three contract crews from Oregon at the McCrea spike camp (H-7) on the Snake Complex in eastern Idaho, whose members were from Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Only their crew boss spoke English.

Has life at the base camp changed much in his 19 years with the Forest Service? "The food is better," Milo commented. "Most fire food is good quality, although it can become redundant." Sandwiches come in "parts," shrink-wrapped, which cuts down on contamination or spoilage. "Burritos are a new, popular food item," Milo revealed, which were sometimes heated by the firefighters on a shovel. One unplanned meal for a small group of connoisseurs was a rattlesnake, which some firefighters had captured and cooked to perfection over a propane coffee heater.

Asked for his overall impression of his 29-day "hitch," Milo said, "It was like a fantasy. All these people picked up from all over the country, put down in one place, and then we were gone."



Above:
Camp Comradory,
Ann Fire,
Bitterroot National Forest.
Horsin' around at
the fire camp.



John Crawford,
Forestry Technician
Indian Hill Lookout
Nez Perce National Forest

LIFE in the Lookout Tower

by Menn Pollworth,
Information Receptionist
Nez Perce National Forest

For John and Judy Crawford, it's been a way of life for 21 years

Indian Hill Lookout, like other lookouts, is "on top of the world," at the end of a narrow, rough and windy dirt road 14 miles from Selway Falls in the Nez Perce National Forest. The one and a half hour drive to the lookout seems forever.

Staffing the lookout are John and Judy Crawford, of Lolo, Montana, marking 21 seasons as lookout guards at Indian Hill. "It's a way of life for Judy and me," John said, adding, "This is where it all began for us."

John, a forestry graduate of Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point, married Judy in 1974. They left Wisconsin and began their trek to the West. While camping at Rackliff campground on the Selway District, the Crawfords learned of the opening as lookout guards at Indian Hill, one of two staffed lookouts in the district. They made application and got the job.

According to the Crawfords, their culture shock began when they boarded a helicopter that took them to the lookout. Indian Hill Rd 290 was still snowed in. "We were on our own to find and figure things out," John recalled. "Our first adventure was trying to find the spring for water. We had to use melted snow before we found it." They then packed snow in bladder bags more than three miles away.

John once aspired to become a Forest Service ranger and pursued it for several years. After four seasons at Indian Hill, however, he found he was hooked on it. "Now I'm up here because I love it," he added.

"Working here is rewarding when you know you've helped some, like after you've reported a fire or when you've called for help that saved an injured hunter," John said.

For the Crawfords, other rewards at Indian Hill Lookout are the sunrises and sunsets, the moon and stars at night, the morning breeze and the gentle rain. Watching wildlife is their entertainment. "The contrast between the storm and the tranquility that follows is just like heaven. Everything comes alive after a storm, and that's the ultimate for me," John stated.

John is at Indian Hill Lookout from June through September. He works at the Snow Bowl ski resort outside Missoula in the winter. Judy, who teaches at an elementary school in Lolo, joins John at Indian Hill when school is out.

We, on the Nez Perce National Forest, wish the Crawfords many more memorable years at Indian Hill Lookout. We thank them for their 21 seasons of hard work, professionalism, and dedication. They are an asset to the Forest Service.

Restoring Lookouts

by Diana Enright, Public Information Assistant
Kootenai National Forest

*"Some people adopt highways,
I just adopted a lookout."*

Doug Grider of Pullman, Washington, has fallen in love with Forest Service lookouts. The part-time building contractor/part-time marketing director spent part of his summer volunteering to fix up the Gem Peak Lookout, built in the '60s and located within the Cabinet District of the Kootenai National Forest. In need of paint, putty and flooring, Gem Peak found a friend in Grider who had rented the lookout in 1993 and then offered his services in the summer of '94.

"We went up a tower in central Idaho during a storm," Grider said, "and all we could do was stay inside and read. A log book was left there with five years worth of tell-tale tracks and stories (from people who rented the lookout). We even found an entry from some friends in Pullman. That started us visiting lookouts whenever we could."

Gem Peak, atop a 30-foot tower, is the first lookout Grider has repaired. When he rented it in 1993, he knew it needed some help. What with tight funding, Cabinet District Ranger Jim Mershon was grateful for Grider's assistance.

Grider appreciates the time alone on Gem Peak. Located around the 6,000 foot elevation, away from phones and faxes, he finds his stay relaxing and the scenery spectacular.

Grider's friend Rita Robillard, who teaches art at Washington State University, shares his interest in lookouts. She takes panoramic photographs from lookouts. Her work, titled "Lookouts and Outlooks," has been on exhibit in the northwest and shows colorful horizons and storms. The photographs are mounted on long scrolls to create the effect of windows.

Grider says Robillard will be sorry she missed the trip to Gem Peak with its view of the Clark Fork River and where the wind blows hard enough to take the paint off Grider's brush. Fixing the lookout took time, but Grider says his only deadline was to be back in time for Rita's birthday.

Range Reform in Bad Canyon

Doing things differently gets results.

by Earle Kirkbride, Range Volunteer
Beartooth Ranger District, Custer National Forest



Bad Canyon permittees on December 16, 1993 accepting their certificates of appreciation for good land stewardship from Beartooth District Ranger Linda Ward-Williams. Back row (l to r): Bob McKinsey, Bruce Yanzick, Paul Donohoe, Doug Robinette. Front row: Glen McKinsey, Theo Yanzick, Cathy Donohoe, Morgan Robinette, Anna Robinette, and Linda Ward-Williams. (Missing are permittees Clay and Mary Donohoe.)

Not often, but every once in awhile, everything goes right with an ecosystem management project. That's been the case with the Bad Canyon Allotment Management Plan (AMP) in the Beartooth District, Custer National Forest.

The Bad Canyon AMP was developed in 1992 with the cooperation of the five permittees whose cattle graze on the over 13,700 acres of the allotment. Leadership in developing the plan came from Terry Jones, district range conservationist, with major contributions from Bruce May, zone fishery biologist from the Gallatin and Custer Forests.

The plan includes a deferred rotation system of grazing in three pastures and creating a riparian pasture in the Trout Creek drainage. The objectives of the plan include such things as providing habitat for blue grouse and other wildlife, providing shade along stream banks, managing access to streams for people and livestock to protect aquatic resources, as well as allow use by livestock and recreation by the public, and to meet State water quality standards.

Last fall it was clear the plan was proceeding extremely well—so well in fact that Linda Ward-Williams, Beartooth District Ranger awarded the permittees "Certificates of Appreciation For Good Land Stewardship." Some of the good stewardship acts by

permittees included building new fences to mitigate use in riparian areas, developing spring water sources in upland areas, establishing salt grounds away from streams, and paying a full-time herder to keep cattle from concentrating in potential high-use areas.

As part of its ecosystem management approach the forest is making efforts to improve stream habitat in Bad Canyon for the Yellowstone cutthroat trout, the only trout species indigenous to this part of Montana. In partnership with the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, a stream barrier was constructed to isolate a stretch of the stream from invasion by other species. Competitive and contaminating fish were removed from the stream (brown trout and rainbow trout), and 67 Yellowstone cutthroats were introduced from a nearby drainage. The permittees use of a herder helps to control cattle usage of the area near this stream.

One riparian area on the allotment is the Lower Trout Creek drainage. The management plan calls for providing the conditions to raise the water table and increase the cover of willow, cottonwood and other plants to stabilize the stream banks and create a greater number of pools in the stream, a major ecological management objective.

In order to attract or plant beavers in the area, it was necessary for the Forest to require permittees greatly reduce grazing

after completely resting the area for two years. The ranchers cooperated by constructing over two miles of fence to keep their cattle out of the Trout Creek drainage.

Bad Canyon is an example of how permittees today are being required to do work that enhances major ecosystem changes as a condition of grazing their livestock on public lands. The whole Bad Canyon story shows what can be accomplished when five independent-minded permittees and Forest Service people work together, and when dedicated professionals have the time and financial resources to participate in land planning and education with people who make their living from the land.



Good News About the Grizzlies

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee met July 20-22 at the Powell Ranger District, Clearwater National Forest.

Among the important news to come out of the meeting was that the number of grizzlies in the northern Rocky Mountain region is increasing. One of the most significant decisions to be made at the meeting was to move forward with the development of an environmental impact statement addressing recovery of the grizzly bear in the Bitterroot ecosystem.

A featured speaker at the meeting was Bud Moore, former Powell District Ranger 1949-54 and director of the Northern

Region's Division of Fire Management from 1969-74. As a boy hiking and working in the wilds of the Bitterroots in the 1920s, he was able to observe first hand the habits of the giant bear and the excitement of a grizzly encounter. Through personal experiences, research and interviews with old timers, he could also speak with familiarity on the general area of the Lochsa drainage as bear habitat.

Being present during the rapid decline and eventual demise of the grizzlies in the Bitterroots was not something Moore would have wished for. He is encouraged by the prospects of grizzlies being present again in the Bitterroots. "The Bitterroots are diminished without a flourishing grizzly population," Moore stated. "They were a special part of the mountains' wildness."



Top: IGBC at Beaver Ridge, Clearwater National Forest. R-1 Regional Forester Dave Jolly second from left, first row. At left: Bud Moore (l) and Tom Puchlerz, R-1 national grizzly bear habitat coordinator.



Left to right, squad members from the SO included: Leah MacDonald (receptionist); Marianne Zadra (personnel); Barb Roberts, Guy Schmidt and Bob Casey (engineering); Glenda Scott (silviculturist); Richard Saunders (soil scientist); Bob Korb (engineering) on the truck.

VICTORY IN THE WEED WAR

by Leah MacDonald, Receptionist
Lewis and Clark National Forest

This summer the heinous spotted knapweed invaded the parking lot adjacent to the Lewis & Clark Supervisor's Office. So, on a warm sunny day in July, while the enemy was "napping," the Volunteer Weed Control Squad reconnoitered and planned their attack.

The Weed Squad, captained by Leah MacDonald, took the knapweed by surprise, knocking out the forward scout posi-

tions, overrunning the front lines, sweeping around the side trenches, infiltrating the high command posts, and utterly put the troops to rout. After the dust of battle settled, weed carcasses covered the back of Bob Casey's flatbed truck and filled a dumpster.

One week later, the squad leader found a lone survivor of the battle, and it, too, bit the dust.

Federal Agencies Take Message to State Fair

Over 3,500 visitors to the North Dakota State Fair in Minot got a look at what Federal lands in western North Dakota have to offer. Representatives from the McKenzie and Medora Ranger Districts, Theodore Roosevelt National Park and Dickinson Bureau of Land Management spent July 22 - 29, explaining their agency's role in administration of these lands.

Through a cooperative effort, the three agencies developed a display to depict the Federal land uses, from recreation to miner-

als, grazing to archeology. The Park Service provided the "touch and feel" by bringing a buffalo hide and elk horns, BLM provided raw mineral deposits.

According to Mark Sexton, Medora Ranger District forestry technician and fair committee spokesman, this is the first time the Forest Service has been involved with a display at the State Fair in recent years.

by Arlis Waltos, Information Assistant
Custer National Forest



L to R - Randy Wester, Theodore Roosevelt National Park, and Delores Shimek, McKenzie Ranger District, Custer National Forest

AWARDS

Dean Graham, regional rural development specialist, recently received a Regional Forester's award for the leadership, commitment, and dedication he has exhibited in coordinating the Region's Rural Community Assistance Program. That leadership has included the establishment of relationships with State and local governments, communities, non-profit organizations, and individuals to increase the agency's effectiveness in assisting rural communities experiencing hardship because of dependence on a single natural resource industry.

Among Dean's innovations to promote sustainable rural development was the highly successful conference held last April in Missoula, "Growing Sustainable Forest Enterprises: An Intermountain Idea Fair." The conference was designed to expand the thinking of people in forest products-related industries to the many opportunities inher-



Above: Dean Graham at left receiving his award from Regional Forester Dave Jolly.

ent to this industry's future. It included a variety of sessions which featured businesses and communities sharing their experiences and knowledge in adding value to primary forest products. The conference attracted over 300 participants from Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Montana.

On September 8, Beth Horn, director of the R-1 Public Affairs Office, announced the recipients of the Director's Award of Excellence in Public Involvement. Both an individual and group award were given.

The individual award was made to **Cynthia Lane**, Selway District Ranger, Nez Perce National Forest. Cited in the nomination from Forest Supervisor Mike King was her active pursuit of public involvement in a useful and successful way to arrive at good decisions supported by the public. Also highlighted was her readiness to learn the latest technology to try innovative ways to improve involvement with the public.

The Group Award went to the **Fortine Ranger District**, Kootenai National Forest, for the outstanding public involvement strategy implemented in the Environmental Impact Statement for the Upper Sunday Timber Sale. The district's history of responsiveness to public concerns and their openness to hear and use the views of the public was mentioned as being important in building and strengthening public confidence in the Forest Service in the community.



L to R - front row: Loretta Montoya, Kaye Dobrocke and her daughter Ann Marie, Beth Burren. Back row: Len Davis, Marv Davis, Beth Hodder-Koss, Debbie Bond, and Doreen Roos.

A team of Forest Service employees climbed a really BIG MOUNTAIN on August 6 to help conquer disabilities! This group of highly trained individuals made their way to the 7,000 foot summit of The Big Mountain Ski Resort along the 3.8 mile Danny On Memorial Trail.

The annual Climb the Big Mountain fund raising event is sponsored by Flathead Industries, a Flathead Valley organization that helps people with disabilities. The Forest Service team joined over 1,000 climbers from the community. The Hungry Horse/Spotted Bear/Glacier View/Tally Lake Ranger Districts team raised over \$700 towards building a new group home in Kalispell. Hungry Horse employee Marvin Lane

was team captain and champion money raiser with over \$500 in pledges. He also was the first member of the team to the top!

Team members Beth Hodder-Koss, Kaye Dobrocke Beth Burren, Debbie Bond, Doreen Roos, and Loretta Montoya enjoyed the spectacular day and all the free food along the way. Two members, Jane Packer and Teresa Wenum, were called off to fight fires and couldn't make the climb. But they'll be there next year! A special thanks to all those who pledged to help conquer disabilities.

by Debbie Bond, Three Forks Planning Team, Hungry Horse Ranger District, Flathead National Forest

Climbing With a Mission

The Right Stuff

by Kathy Thompson,
Information Receptionist,
Clearwater National Forest

For **James Fry**, it was a day on the job, helping visitors.

For **Helen La Follette-Scott** and her son **Lee La Follette** of Kingsport, Tennessee, it was a day of adventure, discovering out-of-the-way places in Idaho.

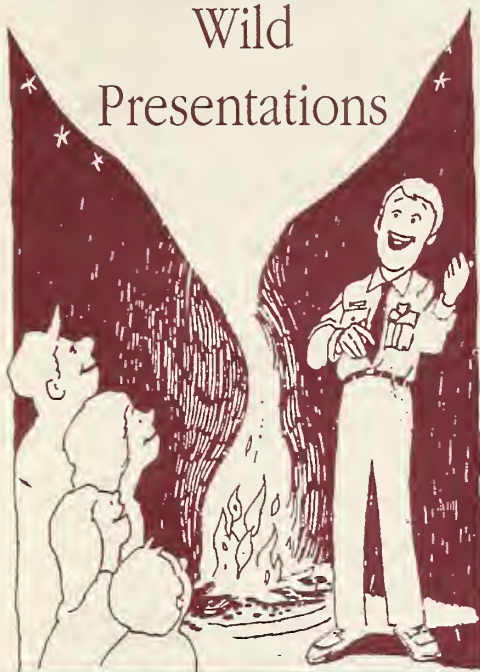
While hiking to Elk Creek Falls on the Palouse Ranger District of the Clearwater National Forest, the La Follettes stopped Fry to ask questions. "He truly personified what I think a Ranger should be," said Mrs. La Follette in a letter to Acting District Ranger Steve Petro. "He was so clean, his uniform pressed to perfection....Most important was his gracious attitude and smile. He answered our questions like a professional Ranger should."

Mrs. La Follette commended Fry for his enthusiasm, his courtesy, his "intense zeal for the National Forest" and "his love of Idaho."

She ended her letter by saying, "Thanks for all the Forest Service does."

Thank you, Mrs. La Follette, for the kind words. And thank you, James Fry, for representing the Forest Service so honorably.

Campers Enjoy Wild Presentations



by Lynne Dixon, "Call of the Wild!" Coordinator & Teresa Weimann, Wilderness Education Specialist
Hungry Horse Ranger District,
Flathead National Forest

From the July 4 weekend through Labor Day, campers at private and Flathead National Forest campgrounds, responded to the "Call of the Wild!" interpretive programs. Children dashed about playing the "predator" game, pretending to be eagles bringing prey home to their eaglets; stream-side visitors searched for insect larvae under rocks; campers gasped and laughed at the incredible bear and wolf slides and wondered over animal hides and track casts, and arrowheads; and the faces of visitors of all ages lit up, as they stroked the long necks of gentle llamas, packed for the backcountry.

Over 1,100 campers, visiting the Flathead National Forest from all over Montana, the United States and the world, enjoyed the weekly presentations.

The 35 hour-long programs were sponsored by the Hungry Horse Ranger District Wilderness Education Program. A Challenge-Cost Share partnership between the Forest Service, private campgrounds and raft companies helped make the presentations possible.

Flathead Forest employees and speakers representing Glacier National Park, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Flathead Llama Club, Center for Wildlife Information, Brown Bear Resources and the Glacier Institute, also contributed to the success of the 1994 program.

With the enthusiastic support of audiences and presenters, we look forward to more "Call of the Wild!" presentations.

The "IN" Place to Be.....

by Jennifer Johnsten, Forester
Kings Hill Ranger District,
Lewis & Clark National Forest

The "in" place Friday nights in July was the Belt Creek Information Station of the Kings Hill Ranger District, Lewis and Clark National Forest. Everyone turned out for a lecture series ranging from local settlement and mining history, to sensitive plants of the area. Also, popular were Charlie Russell's art in the Judith Basin, and a tour of the Sluicibox State Park.

The unexpectedly high attendance (30-40 per evening) caused the programs to be held in the

largest room available at the station - the fire engine garage. Most of the attendees came from the local community of Monarch/Neihart, but some came from Great Falls (55 miles away) while others drove as far as 90 miles to attend! The visitors were treated to a evening of information, refreshments and conversation.

Speakers represented the Forest Service and Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Seeing Montana with

CHARLIE RUSSELL

by Larry Timchak, District Ranger
Judith Basin Ranger District,
Lewis and Clark National Forest

Famed Western artist Charlie Russell arrived in the Judith Basin of central Montana in 1880, when buffalo herds were still plentiful. Within 3 years, they were gone. Fortunately, Russell was able to capture this and other vanishing pieces of American history on canvas.

A new publication, "C.M. Russell Auto Tour," uses Russell's artwork as a way to glimpse into Western life of 100 years ago. Paintings reproduced in the brochure, combined with interesting historical text, are coordinated with 24 auto stops along Highway 87 between Great Falls and Lewistown and along Memorial Way. Memorial Way winds up the Judith River from Utica into the Lewis and Clark National Forest.

The scenes in several of Russell's paintings are readily recognized today. For example, "Medicine Man" interprets the history of the

Blackfeet in the Basin near the town of Geyser. Square Butte, Round Butte and the Highwood Mountains form the backdrop to this painting.

The nicely designed brochure was a cooperative effort between Judith Basin Historical Society, Judith Basin County, C.M. Russell Museum and the Lewis and Clark National Forest. A Community Transportation Enhancement Program grant from the Montana Department of Transportation helped finance the printing of the brochure. This project was the first proposal in Montana approved under the recently enacted ISTEA or Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. Russell Country provided matching shares for the grant.

Copies of the auto tour are available at local visitor centers, the C.M. Russell Museum and Forest Service offices.

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARS

The McKenzie and Medora Ranger Districts, Custer National Forest, are training grounds for two USDA National Scholars—Stephanie Snow, from Chicago, Illinois; and Shannon Yancy, from Montgomery, Alabama.

The new program is designed to work with outstanding black high school students interested in those disciplines represented in the Forest Service. The Northern Region volunteered as an area of placement for selected scholars.

Shannon has an interest in wildlife and worked for 3 weeks with various employees at the McKenzie Ranger District. Stephanie, with her interest in botany, had the opportunity to spend 3 weeks with employees at the Medora Ranger District.

by Delores Shimek, Support Service Supervisor
McKenzie Ranger District, Custer National Forest



L to R - Stephanie Snow and Shannon Yancy

Personnel Update

BEAVERHEAD NATIONAL FOREST

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

ANDERSON, BRIAN, forestry technician, Madison RD, spot award
 CHRISTENSEN, SHERRY, support services clerk, SO, cash award
 DERKSEN, LEE, forester, SO, spot award
 EDMINSTON, DONALD, forestry aid, Madison RD, spot award
 FUNK, KIP, forestry technician, Madison RD, spot award
 JANIK, JOHN, forestry technician, Madison RD, spot award
 KLETTE, ROGER, forestry technician, Madison RD, spot award
 MCCARTY, DIANNA, forestry technician, Wisdom RD, spot award
 MILLER, TOBIAS, forestry technician, Wise River RD, spot award
 MILLER, JUANITA, resource assistant, SO, cash award
 PETERS, DAVID, forestry technician, Wise River RD, spot award
 PETRONI, DIANE, forester, Madison RD, cash award
 ROWE, MICHAEL, forestry technician, Madison RD, spot award
 STEWART, DARYL, forestry technician, Madison RD, spot award
 SUENRAM, PERI, program analyst, SO, cash award
 VINCENT, TIM, forestry technician, Madison RD, spot award

REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

LA VALLEY, SHANE, contract specialist, from Nez Perce NF, reassignment, SO
 MOORE, CAREY, information receptionist, from R-5, Santa Lucia RD, Los Padres NF., transfer, Dillon RD
 ROUNDY, JEFF, forestry technician (law enforcement officer), from Red River RD, Nez Perce NF, reassignment, law enforcement officer, Dillon RD
 RUSSELL, FRANK, forestry technician, from Jefferson RD, Deerlodge NF, reassignment, supervisory forestry technician, SO
 RUSSELL, LAURIE, resource clerk, from Jefferson RD, Deerlodge NF, reassignment accounting technician, SO
 SCHULTE, DARRELL, forester, from Deerlodge NF, reassignment, SO,

BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

ALEXANDER, JOE, range technician, Sula RD, cash award
 BENNETT, MICHAEL, alcohol & drug abuse specialist, Trapper Creek JCC, cash award
 CALLANTINE, KIM, forestry technician, West Fork RD, belt buckle award
 DECKER, RUTH, office automation clerk, Trapper Creek JCC, promotion, student services clerk
 DUTTON, DAN, automotive worker, SO, promotion, R-4 Payette NF, heavy mobile equipment mechanic
 GAUL, ROYLENE, legal assistant, SO, promotion, legal instruments examiner
 HINMAN, TERRY, training instructor business management, Trapper Creek JCC, promotion
 LYKINS, DENNIS, packer, West Fork RD, cash award
 MERKEL, RAY, supervisory vocational training specialist, Trapper Creek JCC, cash award
 RAPPE-DANIELS, OLLEKE, acting forest planner/administrative officer, SO, belt buckle award
 ROSE, SUSAN, mail & file clerk, SO, promotion, computer assistant
 WILSON, MIKE, forestry technician, Stevensville RD, promotion
REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS
 BURSLEY, DONNA, student services clerk, Trapper Creek JCC, transfer, R-3, Gila NF Quemado RD, office automation clerk
 CROSS, MARCIA, archeologist, from Lolo NF, reassignment, SO
 HERNANDEZ, CESAR, social services assistant, from R-6, Colville NF, Curlew JCC, transfer, Trapper Creek JCC
 STONER, DOUG, social services assistant, from Trapper Creek JCC, reassignment, Nez Perce NF, range technician

CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

BERG, ED, civil engineering technician, Pierce RD, promotion
 CRAWFORD, CONNIE, purchasing agent, SO, cash award
 CURTIS, RANDY, supervisory civil engineering technician, SO, cash award
 GERRISH, MARY ANN, administrative officer, SO, temporary promotion
 GRIMM, VICKI, finance assistant, Pierce RD, cash award
 HAYS, MICHAEL, botanist, Palouse RD, spot award
 HENSLEY, RICHARD (BRIAN), forestry technician, North Fork RD, cash award
 JOHNSTON, ROBBIN, student trainee archeology, Palouse RD, promotion
 LASHLY, GAYLE, purchasing agent, SO, cash award
 MANNING, GARY, supervisory forester, Palouse RD, cash award
 MARTIN, GLENN, forestry technician, from North Fork RD, temporary promotion, R-5, Warner Mountain RD, Modoc NF
 RASH, BARBARA, finance assistant, North Fork RD, temporary promotion
 RIEBE, DEANNA, public affairs specialist, SO, cash award
 RIEMAN, JEANNE, personnel assistant, SO, time off award

SWAYNE, LYNNE, civilian pay clerk, North Fork RD, temporary promotion, support services supervisor
 TRIBBLE, KENDA, personnel assistant, SO, time off award
 WILLIAMS, ROBERT, forestry technician, Palouse RD, spot award
 WYNN, LAUREL, personnel specialist, SO, time off award

REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

BROOKS, ERVIN, supervisory civil engineer, SO, reassignment
 COON, CARLA, resource clerk, from North Fork RD, reassignment, SO, office automation clerk
 KASZA, JOHN, supervisory civil engineer, SO, reassignment same classification
 LANE, CYNTHIA, district ranger, Selway RD, Nez Perce NF, promotion, district ranger, Lochsa RD
 PETERSON, MICHAEL, forestry technician, Palouse RD, promotion, maintenance worker, Intermountain Research Station at Moscow, Idaho
 PIERSON, PATRICIA, office automation clerk, SO, promotion, office automation clerk, Missoula Technology Development Center
 SYTH, GARY, surveying technician, from IPNF, reassignment, forestry technician, SO
 WHITNEY, WESLEY (JIM), telecommunications specialist, SO, promotion, telecommunications specialist, Nez Perce NF

CUSTER NATIONAL FOREST

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

ALT, THOMAS L., forestry technician, Beartooth RD, cash award
 CARD, DAVID J., computer specialist, SO, detail, temporary promotion, supervisory computer specialist, Bitterroot NF
 GILDEHAUS, JEFFREY, forestry technician, Beartooth RD, cash award
 MENDENHALL, LAURA C., information receptionist, SO, cash award
 PARKER, THOMAS J., biological aid, Medora RD, cash award
 PETIK, GARY L., rangeland management specialist, McKenzie RD, promotion, supervisory rangeland management specialist
 SMITH, BARBARA J., resource clerk/office automation, SO, cash award
REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS
 HANSEN, ELMER D., information receptionist, SO, reassignment, mail & file clerk
 WATKINS, MICHAEL W., forestry technician, Beartooth RD, reassignment, law enforcement officer

NEW EMPLOYEES

SNOW, STEPHANIE A., student trainee (botany), McKenzie RD
 YANCY, SHANNON L., student trainee (wildlife biologist), McKenzie RD

RESIGNATIONS

FARRELL, JAMES P., wildlife biologist, Sioux RD

FLATHEAD NATIONAL FOREST

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

GARDENER, BETH, fisheries biologist, from R-9, Huron-Manistee NF, promotion, fisheries biologist, SO
 HALVERSON, JANICE, public affairs specialist, SO, cash award
 SODERSTROM, KEITH, supervisory forestry technician, SO, cash award
 SUTTON, JODY, information receptionist, SO, cash award
 TOMAS, SUE, office automation clerk, SO, cash award

REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

BLACK, MYRA, rangeland management specialist, from R-4 Boise NF, transfer, rangeland management specialist, Tally Lake RD.

GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

BUHL, NORM, engineering technician, Bozeman RD, cash award
 CIFALA, FRANK, resource assistant, Big Timber RD, cash award
 DIXON, BEV, program assistant, SO, time off award
 GOOBY, MARYANN, office automation clerk, SO, promotion
 HOPPE, PATRICK, range technician, Gardiner RD, promotion
 PARRENT, SANDY, business management assistant, Big Timber RD, cash award
 ROE, JOAN, personnel clerk, SO, promotion
 SCHLENKER, KIMBERLY, forester, SO, cash award
 SPARKS, JIM, wildlife biologist, Big Timber RD, cash award

REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

JOHNSON, LYNN, budget and finance officer, from Lewis & Clark NF, reassignment, SO

IDAHO PANHANDLE NATIONAL FORESTS

AWARDS/PROMOTIONS

HUBBELL, JULIE, forest technician, Bonners Ferry RD, promotion

Personnel Update

JONES-NORTH, JANA, forester, Sandpoint RD, promotion
 KAYNE, BOBBIE, purchasing agent, Coeur d'Alene Nursery, promotion,
 accounting technician, SO

REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

ANDERSON, SUSAN, pay and property assistant, Coeur d'Alene Nursery,
 reassignment, shipping and property assistant
 EDGAR, RANDY, administrative officer, from Priest Lake RD, reassignment,
 budget analyst, SO
 GIBBS, LINDA, administration officer, from Sandpoint RD, reassignment,
 supervisory resource specialist, SO
 JACKSON, PATTY, resource clerk, Priest Lake RD, reassignment, office
 automation clerk,
 JOHNSON, COLLEEN, supply clerk, from Coeur d'Alene Nursery,
 reassignment, accounting technician, SO
 MACDONALD, LAURENE, resource assistant, from Fernan RD, reassign-
 ment, purchasing agent, SO
 MCONNAUGHEY, HARLOW, administrative officer, from Bonners Ferry
 RD, reassignment, budget analyst, SO
 QUALLS, LELANA, procurement technician, SO, reassignment, supply clerk
 REICHERT, GEORGENE, resource clerk, from Fernan RD, reassignment,
 mail and file clerk, SO
 SCHREMPF, DALE, civil engineering technician, from Wallace RD,
 reassignment, civil engineering technician, Priest Lake RD
 GLEN, TAMMY, resource clerk/office automation, Bonners Ferry RD,
 reassignment, resource clerk

RESIGNATIONS

WAGONER, DOUGLAS, civil engineering technician, SO

LOLO NATIONAL FOREST

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

FLINDERS, CHRISTINA, forestry technician, Seeley Lake RD, spot award
 FLYNN, CAROLYN, personnel assistant, SO, spot award
 HILMO, RON, forestry technician, Ninemile RD, time off award
 MACDONALD, DIANNE, civilian pay clerk, Missoula RD, performance
 award
 MITCHELL, BECKY, personnel clerk, SO, spot award
 MONACO, ANGIE, personnel assistant, SO, spot award
 NINNEMAN, FRANCINE, personnel assistant, SO, spot award
 PANCAKE, JEANNE, supply clerk, SO, spot award
 PARTAKER, EVELYN, supervisory personnel assistant, SO, spot award
 PETERSON, KAREN, business management clerk, Seeley Lake RD, special
 act award
 TANBERG, KAREN, forestry technician, Seeley Lake RD, spot award

REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

KAMPS, AMBER, forester, from Bonners Ferry RD, IPNF, reassignment,
 Superior RD

REGIONAL OFFICE

AWARDS & PROMOTIONS

ANTONICH, PATRICIA, program assistant, WRHP, promotion
 BECKLEY, ROBERT, photographer, MTDC, promotion
 BROWN, STEPHANIE, forestry technician, AFD, spot award
 COOK, THOMAS, forestry technician, AFD, spot award
 DELGADO, KIM, information assistant, PAO, cash award
 DILLON, NANCY, computer specialist, MS, promotion
 ECHOLS, ALICE, computer scientist, MS, conversion to career-conditional
 appointment and promotion
 ELLINGTON, WAYNE, forestry technician, AFD, spot award
 EVERETT, JAN, personnel assistant, AFD, promotion
 FINNEMAN, COLEEN, program assistant, AFD, spot award
 HAYES, ANDREW, lead forestry technician, AFD, temporary promotion
 GRAY, TIM, computer scientist, MS, cash award
 LEHFELDT, DENNIS, lead forestry technician, AFD, temporary promotion
 MANNING, CYNTHIA, social scientist, L&FP, cash award
 MUNTER, SHERRY, public affairs specialist, L&FP, cash award
 PLATTES, MICHAEL, forestry technician, AFD, spot award and temporary
 promotion
 ROBINSON, LAIRD, public affairs specialist, PAO, cash award
 ROGERS, CHARLES, supervisory forestry technician, AFD, temporary
 promotion
 SHERICK, STEPHAN, public affairs specialist, PAO, cash award
 SUMMERFIELD, DALLAS, contract specialist, Lolo NF, promotion, ADM
 WABAUNSEE, KENNETH, lead forestry technician smokejumper, temporary
 promotion
 WENIGER, JAMES, supervisory forestry technician, AFD, temporary
 promotion

ZWANG, CHERYLE, public affairs specialist, PAO, cash award
NEW EMPLOYEES

BENEFIEL, MARY, office automation clerk, L&FP

REASSIGNMENTS/TRANSFERS

ERICKSON, RONALD, forester, from R-6, Siuslaw NF, transfer, L&M
 KIRKPATRICK, ROBERT, environmental engineer, from R4, transfer, ENG
 MARTIN, ZUMA, computer specialist, from WO, transfer, MS
 NINNEMAN, FRANCINE, personnel assistant, from Lolo NF, transfer, PM
 SWANSON, GAIL, accounting technician, ENG, reassignment

RETIREMENTS

Erma Kaeding, cartographic technician, Kootenai National Forest, retired
 September 3 after 20 years with the Forest Service. Erma began her career with
 the Kootenai in April 1969, working various temporary positions until she
 received her permanent appointment as a cartographic technician.

Erma and her husband Rudy will continue to reside in Libby. They plan some
 traveling, fishing, camping and other activities, plus taking time to enjoy
 visiting with their children and grandchildren.

Nancy Mjelde, center director, Trapper Creek Job Corps Civilian Conserva-
 tion Center, Bitterroot National Forest, retired in September with 26 years with
 the Forest Service. Her assignments have included director, Curlew Civilian
 Conservation Center, Wauconda, Washington; Eldorado, and Shasta Trinity
 National Forests, California; Kootenai National Forest, Montana; Idaho
 Panhandle National Forests, Idaho; and the Washington Office where she
 managed Hosted Programs and the Youth Conservation Corps.

Nancy will continue her involvement on the board of directors for the
 Women's Center Inc., in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, as well as activities dealing with
 women's equality issues. Other retirement activities will include travel and
 spending more time with family and grandchildren.

She will be moving to Post Falls, Idaho.

OTHER RETIREMENTS

Edison Brockhausen, telecommunications specialist, RO (MS)

Robert Johnson, supervisory forestry technician, Swan Lake RD, Flathead NF

Ray Merkle, supervisory vocational training specialist, Trapper Creek JCC,

Charles Snyder, supervisory civil engineer, SO, Flathead NF

In Memoriam

Firman L. Mann, 65, died August 31 at his home in Hamilton. He began
 working for the Forest Service as a laborer in June 1950 at the Sula Ranger
 District, Bitterroot National Forest, before serving 2 years in the U.S. Army.
 Upon his return, the remainder of his career was spent on the Sula Ranger District
 as a maintenance engineer. He also worked on fire crews and in fire control. He
 retired from the Forest Service in April 1978 with 25 years of service.

A Note from Ray Rizer, Retiree

About twenty years ago I took a strike team to a fire in Santa Barbara,
 California. It was a long night, but when morning came we had the fire
 under control.

I sat on a lawn in someone's front yard looking down the hill at the
 devastation below me and waited for the day shift to come and relieve us.

As I sat there, a man came out of the house behind me, walked over
 and sat down beside me. He sat there a few minutes and then he said,
 "How do you thank someone for saving everything you've worked for
 all your life?" I figured he already had.

As he got up and started to walk away, he said, "I'll remember green
 trucks as long as I live."

On November 12, 1992, I had my second heart attack. After a month
 or so I figured I was ready to return to work. So, I went to see my doctor.
 He said, "Well Ray, does this tell you anything?" I asked him what he
 meant. He said that I should never return to work if I wanted to live. I was
 one year short of retirement. This meant that all I qualified for was a
 medical retirement which is less than fire retirement.

My friends in the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management
 donated hundreds of hours of annual leave to pull me through the next
 eight months, the time it took my wife to do battle with the Office of
 Workers' Compensation and get our case accepted.

Without this help from my fellow employees, I would have lost my
 home and would have been forced to take a much lower retirement. Now
 I guess it's my turn to ask you, "How do you thank someone for saving
 everything you've worked for all your life?"

Well, I'll remember green trucks and yellow trucks as long as I live.

Thank you all, very much.

from a letter to the Supervisor's Office, Custer National Forest



L to R: Tim Hancock, Chief Jack Ward Thomas, and District Ranger Fred Salias with the plaque the Gallatin National Forest received for the Thompson Creek Project.

The Chief Pays a Visit

*by Janet McClure
Receptionist
Bozeman Ranger District
Gallatin National Forest*

The June 24 family meeting wasn't an ordinary one for Gallatin National Forest employees—Chief Jack Ward Thomas and Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Jim Lyons were in attendance. After a morning meeting in Missoula, the Chief stopped in Bozeman and mingled with Gallatin Forest employees while enjoying a potluck luncheon with the group. Employees from all districts and the supervisor's office were in attendance. District rangers and staff officers cooked and served hamburgers to employees. It was a good opportunity to visit with forest employees from other units, as well as talk personally with the Chief and Assistant Secretary.

Several awards were presented at the family meeting. Livingston District Ranger Fred Salinas and Forest Silviculturist Tim Hancock accepted a National Forest Service timber sale salvage showcase award on behalf of the Gallatin National Forest. The award, one of only five presented nationally within the Forest Service, was created to encourage the prompt and efficient salvage of damaged timber.

Following the awards, the Chief took a few minutes to speak to the group. With the recent upheaval in the organization, it was reassuring to hear the Chief speak of the changes in a positive light. Overall it was a very special family meeting.

Newsletter Guidelines

The Northern Region News is published by the Northern Region Public Affairs Office for employees and retirees. The following are guidelines for submitting stories:

- Articles should feature Forest Service employees and retirees involved in Forest Service activities and projects.
- Articles must be concise and timely. All articles are subject to editing, and may not be used if outdated, inappropriate, or if space does not permit.
- Photos can be color or black and white, glossy finish preferred.

Send articles to G. Weisgerber: R01A (Data General) or Gloria Weisgerber, Northern Region Public Affairs Office, P.O. Box 7669, Missoula, MT 59807. The public affairs officer on your Forest may want to preview articles before they are sent. If so, please follow that process.

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